The

BULLETIN

of the

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

of

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

MARCH 1949

Volume XXIV Number 3

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The papers in this issue present the use of case work philosophy and methods in two special services within the school unit—counseling and school social work. Dr. Cox's paper shows how such an approach gives greater understanding of the child and his problems in the secondary school. Mrs. Young's paper discusses some of the intricacies of the counselor's working relationship with teachers and the constructive use of supervision which can help the counselor understand her own part in working relationships. "Counseling" is a service which has many different definitions, and needs much more professional interpretation, such as these papers, to give educators and social workers better understanding.

Miss Wille's paper delineates clearly one phase of case work service within the school. This paper describes very adequately the case work involved in helping people face their problems and reach the point of making use of community agency resources available for such problems. There is another aspect of case work peculiar to the school setting, namely, working with educators who present their own diagnosis and plan of treatment when they refer cases. A discussion of ways of meeting this problem of professional relationships would be an appropriate companion piece to Miss Wille's paper.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK IN RELATION TO THE USE OF COMMUNITY AGENCIES

By JANE WILLE
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The School Social Worker, in order to be of most service to school children, necessarily helps children to use services within the schools. She also helps children and parents to use community agencies to assist them with problems which are affecting the child's ability to use his school experience constructively or with problems which may be of concern as they relate to the total family. This paper will be concerned with ways in which the school social worker, as part of her work with children and their families, helps parents to use the services of community agencies.

The school social worker as a member of a school faculty is in a unique position to give this kind of help. The familiarity which parents have with the school and the frequent carry-over of the security which they have experienced in their own school relationships often prompt them to discuss their personal and family problems with principals, teachers or other school personnel. Because the school social worker has a knowledge of social agencies, it is usually suggested by school personnel that the parent discuss these problems with her. Many times, also, as the school social worker works with difficulties which a child is presenting in school, the parent brings out family problems which are affecting the child.

In such instances, it is important that the school social worker examine her function and the service which she is able to offer in the area of personal and family problems. The service which she offers in the schools does represent a particular contribution in the total field of social welfare services. The service is offered, however, within the school and the area which it covers is limited by the defined purpose of the school and areas for which the school has accepted responsibility.

Schools have defined their purpose as that of education of children. Although the definition of education is broad in its concept, schools have not by and large interpreted their responsibility as including the provision of total child welfare services. Thus we find that the schools do not consider the offering of family case work, marriage counseling, financial assistance, foster home placement, etc., as appropriate school services. The school social worker, although her training and experience

might equip her to work in these areas, cannot legitimately offer such services in her position as a representative of the school. Within the definition of their function, however, schools have accepted the responsibility of helping children and parents to use community resources for the benefit of the child and the family. In this area, the school social worker has a definite contribution to make as a representative of the school. Her knowledge of social agencies and her understanding of the difficulties which people may have in using them can be of extreme value to school personnel, parents and children.

The school social worker, having set forth as one part of her job helping people to use community agencies, must examine the knowledge and skills which are needed to carry out that part effectively. Most apparent of these is the need to acquire a thorough knowledge of the total social welfare program in the community. This includes a general understanding of the services of the various social agencies, their purpose, areas for which they take responsibility and their practice and procedures. In many instances the school social worker may find it helpful to discuss with the agencies most frequently used, a plan for a cooperative working relationship. This may include procedure for referral and for a cooperative and continuing relationship between the agency and the school. Such procedures may be written in a manual to be used by the staff of both school and agency. At times it may be helpful to have representatives from agencies meet with the school social work staff to discuss the work of the agency and ways in which it may be most helpful to the schools. This is particularly valuable when an agency may be redefining or changing its policies or procedures. The school social worker, likewise, may meet with the staff of an agency to interpret the work that she is doing in the schools and to discuss ways in which the agency and the schools can work together. In these and many other ways the school social worker may develop her knowledge of social agencies and increase her ability to help parents to use them.

In addition to knowledge of the services of agencies, their practice and procedures, the school social worker must have other knowledge and understanding if she is to enable those people with whom she works to request help from and to use the services of these agencies. The school social worker must understand the problems which all people face when they find it necessary to ask for help and the difficulty which they may have in using this help even though they have expressed a desire to have it. It is only as the school social worker under-

stands these problems and is able to work with them that referral to social agencies will be really helpful. This kind of understanding includes awareness of the kind of difficulty which parents might have in asking for and receiving the specific service offered by an agency, for example, the problems that people have in asking for financial assistance or in deciding to place their children in foster homes. Before a person can use the services of an agency to meet his need he will have to deal in some way with his attitudes about this need. The school social worker will not, it is true, help him with all of his feeling about this, but she may have to help him with part of it to enable him to get to the agency. Some parents with whom she works may have very little difficulty in this respect. They may be ready and able to use an agency service and may be coming to the school for information only. In such instances the school social worker can be helpful in giving the necessary information. Often, however, this is not the case and the school social worker has to examine how, as a school social worker, she can be of assistance.

The kind of help which she offers will differ and will be related to the problem and to the person who is presenting the problem. It is possible, however, to look at some of the elements which may be present.

Often, as the school social worker works with a parent on the problem which the child is having in school, she finds that this is only one of many difficulties with which the parent is faced. The parent may show real concern about these problems and may see the relationship between them and part of the child's difficulty in school, but may be at loss to find any way to begin to work on them. The school social worker, partly because of the very limits of her function, helps the parent to look at the part of the problem which he and the worker may consider together. The school social worker appreciates with the parent his desire to be a good parent and helps him to recognize his responsibilities as a parent. The focus of her work with him is in helping him as the parent of a child in school. This focus on a partialized, encompassable area of the problem may help the parent to engage himself in working on one aspect of his total problem. As he and the school social worker work on this, the problems in the home may take on a different perspective and the parent may recognize that he wants to explore ways of getting help with them. This is illustrated in the following material.

Mrs. Green, who was concerned about the problems which Tommy was having in school, had not seemed to be able to effect any change.

She seemed almost immersed in the conflict between being a good daughter and that of being a responsible mother. Tommy, age nine, was presenting serious problems in school. There was excessive absence caused largely by his refusal to go to school, irritability, and difficulty with teachers. Mrs. Green realized that her home life was much disrupted by her aged mother who had become noisy and quarrelsome both at home and with neighbors. Mr. Green had left the home. The grandmother was extremely inconsistent in her relationship with Tommy, at times refusing to allow his friends to visit and at other times criticizing his mother in any attempt which she made to discipline Tommy. The grandmother told Tommy that his mother was "no good" and that he didn't have to obey her. Tommy reacted to the frequent quarrels by refusing to go to school. The school social worker was able to help Mrs. Green with Tommy's return to school but he dawdled over his work and appeared stupid. Conferences with Tommy brought out his conflicting loyalties and his bewilderment over the change in his grandmother and in his home life. His mother had talked about sending his grandmother away, but instead his father had left home. The school social worker discussed with Mrs. Green some of the problems that Tommy was having and recognized with Mrs. Green her desire as a mother to help him. In considering what she could do, Mrs. Green moved toward thinking of placement of her mother. The school social worker explained that the Family Service Association would be an agency that could help with this. She called the Family Service Association but did not keep her appointment. She then thought about sending Tommy to her brother, but as she discussed this with the school social worker and realized what it would mean to her to be without him, she again asked about the services of the Family Service Association. The school social worker explained that a worker from that agency could talk with her about what they could do and could help Mrs. Green to decide whether this was what she wanted. As Mrs. Green became more convinced that she wanted to take responsibility for Tommy, she was able, after several interviews, to decide definitely that she would go to Family Service Association. During her contacts with Family Service Association, Mrs. Green, with the cooperation of her brothers, was able to make a very satisfactory plan to have her mother return to live with friends in her own home town. From the time that Mrs. Green went to the Family Service Association, Tommy began to show improvement. The school social worker continued to see both Mrs. Green and Tommy, giving continued help with Tommy's school adjustment.

Mrs. Green, from the beginning of her work with the school social worker was aware of and concerned about Tommy's problems in school. She knew that he was affected by the home problem. She needed help in thinking through her own responsibility and in deciding what she could do to effect a change.

Sometimes a parent does not recognize the relationship between problems at home and the child's difficulty at school. The school social worker must then take responsibility for helping the parent to see this. Through her work with the child and his teachers, she may be able to bring to the parents information about the child as he expresses himself in school which gives the parent a different way of thinking about the total family problem. This is illustrated in work with Mrs. J.

When the school social worker called to discuss with Mrs. J. the irregular attendance of her fourteen and fifteen year old boys, she seemed not to hear the problem. She poured forth all the troubles which kept her from considering what was happening to Jim and Joe. Threatened with eviction because of the illness and irregular employment of her husband, she had given tacit consent to Joe's occasional absences from school because at these times he sometimes earned a dollar or two. She seemed obsessed with the fear that ill luck must always pursue her, and termed their present house as "ill luck" house. Because the sheriff came at the time of the interview the school social worker said that she would not stay but would return to discuss the boy's school problems.

At the time of the second interview, the mother seemed less anxious but continued to discuss the many problems existing in the home, most of which were based on financial difficulties. The school social worker said that she, too, was concerned about Mrs. J's difficulties because they seemed to be affecting the children in school. She said that the teachers had told her that when the boys came to school they seemed tired, anxious and worried. The teachers were very much concerned about them. The school social worker said that she wanted to tell Mrs. J. about this because she was sure that Mrs. J., as their mother, would want to know about it. She wondered if Mrs. J. had noticed that the boys seemed worried. Mrs. J. seemed, for the first time, to be able to think of the children saying "all this trouble is pretty tough for them". She told about one of the boys finding the eviction notice and saying that he would not go to school, he would have to find a job. She said that she realized that she and her husband had done a great deal of talking before the boys. The school social worker wondered if Mrs. J.

thought there was something that she and Mr. J. could do to help them. Mrs. J. Said that all of their problems seemed to center around their need for money. The worker explained that Family Service Association was an agency that could help them to discuss possible solutions for their financial problem.

Mrs. J. Spoke of a previous experience with the agency. She had not been helped at that time and was reluctant to go there again. The school social worker asked her if there was anything different about the request that she would be making at this time. Mrs. J. said that there was a difference because when she first went, Mr. J. was not employed and they referred her to the Department of Public Assistance. At the present time Mr. J. is employed, but they have been having difficulty in managing on his income because of unexpected expenses. The worker agreed that the request which Mrs. J. would be making now was quite different from her previous one and wondered if she would be able to return to the agency on this different basis. The school social worker pointed out to Mrs. J. that the extent to which she could use the service of this agency depended on her willingness to work with them on her problems. Mrs. J. became thoughtful as she recognized that she had a real part in what she would like to do about this, but indicated that she thought she would probably call the agency.

At the time of the following interview Mr. J. had been to the Family Service Association and told the social worker briefly about the plan for continued interviews at that agency. During this interview, Mrs. J. was able for the first time to take part actively in a discussion of the boys' problems at school. She showed a very real understanding of the boys, discussing their abilities and interests. She talked about Joe's slowness in learning and wondered about the possibility of vocational placement because of his interest in shop work. In ensuing interviews she talked about the differences in the two boys and asked for help in planning for each one. She began to assume responsibility for keeping them in school and in encouraging them to continue in school beyond their sixteenth birthdays. Throughout these interviews the school social worker recognized with Mrs. J. her desire to provide an adequate home and to assume her responsibilities in relation to the boys.

At the beginning of these contacts, Mrs. J. seemed to be so involved in her own worries that it was not possible for her to consider the children or to begin to work on any of her problems. The school social worker, through her knowledge of the children in school and her recognition of Mrs. J.'s responsibility for them, helped Mrs. J. to begin

to work in this area. It is interesting to note from the record that as Mrs. J. became a more adequate mother, she assumed responsibilities in other areas also. One notation mentions the fact that Mrs. J. had talked with her real estate agent, who represented the owner of several houses in the block, about the condition of the houses. As a result of this discussion, she was circulating a petition to her neighbors to be presented to the owner, asking that all of the houses be fumigated to exterminate bed bugs which had infested this block. She seemed to be taking an active part in dispelling the "ill luck" which she had previously accepted as her lot.

In these cases we see that the school social worker, as she offers her particular service related to the problems of the child in school, may help the parent to identify areas in which she needs the kind of service offered by a social agency. These cases illustrate, also, some of the difficulty which the parent may have in beginning to use another agency. The desire at first may be weak and the parent may retreat from her intention. In such instances, conviction of the value of the agency on the part of the worker and methods of persuasion are not effective and do not seem valid to the parent. The school social worker must help the parent to come to his own decision by keeping before him the continued problem which the child is having in school and by keeping the parent actively engaged in working on this problem with the school. It is only as he goes to the agency out of his own need and his own desire to use the agency to meet this need that he can participate in using the service of the agency. This has implications, which will merely be noted here, for methods of referral. In most instances it seems essential that the parent make his own application to the agency. The school social worker may facilitate this through her knowledge of agency procedure, but it is essential that the parent participate in an application which is something much more active and meaningful than merely being the willing party to a "referral". This does not apply to those serious protective situations in which action may have to be taken without consent of the parent.

The school social worker recognizes, as she works with parents who are using the services of agencies, that there will be some problems for the parent, not only at the beginning, but after work with the agency is actually in process. Often the parent will come back with complaints about the agency or the agency worker and with question about whether he wants to continue with the agency. The school social worker should, through her understanding of people, be able to recognize with the

parent the difficulties involved in using help. If she is able to keep her work with the parent focussed on what the parent can do to help the child, the parent will be able to decide whether he can go on with the agency in spite of the difficulties. Too often the school social worker tends to accept the complaints at face value without seeing that they may be evidence of the parent's problem in receiving help. The worker who fails to see this and who attempts to give service which she cannot responsibly give within her function, in lieu of helping the parent to return to the agency, may deprive the family of a needed service.

The importance of helping parents to use social agencies cannot be minimized. The school may be the first to recognize critical problems and evidence of strain within the family. The threat to mental and physical health of children who are subjected to long, continued deprivation caused by family problems emphasizes the importance of help which will alleviate these problems when they are first recognized. The school social worker must accept this part of her work responsibly and must develop knowledge and skills which will enable her to perform it effectively.

TEACHER-COUNSELOR RELATIONSHIPS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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One of the most discriminating tests of the counselor's ability to help a pupil with troubling school problems is how skillfully the counselor works with teachers and principal. There is no way to achieve completely responsible carrying of the counselor's function in the school except through the effecting of these faculty relationships successfully and with mutual respect. This is a difficult requirement particularly in secondary schools where there are many obstacles to developing a real partnership between teachers and counselors.

There are such evident obstacles to counselors and teachers working together as the complexity of organization in the secondary school with the omission generally of rostered time for needed consultation. Except in those situations where flexible curriculum planning includes provision for pupils to remain with one teacher several periods in the day, teachers are responsible for as many as two hundred or more different pupils whom they teach from one to five periods weekly. Home room groups are frequently record keeping sections where advisers have little opportunity to know their pupils as individuals.

Perhaps more difficult for the counselor to handle because it presents a psychological barrier to successful relationships, is the factor of difference in the counselor's understanding of, and approach to these pupils and their problems. Their way of helping students seems very different to many school people and needs continual interpretation if counseling is to be a utilized and appreciated resource of the school. Of equal importance in overcoming this obstacle to working together is the enthusiasm with which the counselor accepts the school, identifying with its purposes and believing in its fundamental rightness for children.

This discussion is based upon what I have observed as a supervisor of the problems junior high school counselors encounter daily in working with teachers and principal. The illustrations are drawn from the content of my conferences with counselors wherein these problems were discussed. Together we have worked on means whereby relationships with faculty members might be improved.

A strategic part of the counseling process, which of necessity involves teacher-counselor cooperation, is the referral. Experience in the Philadelphia public schools has indicated that fifty-seven percent of the secondary school pupils receiving counseling service are referred by teachers. Even the approximately twenty-five percent of the total group counseled who refer themselves represent, significantly enough, the support and interest of teachers and principal who encourage pupils to seek help freely when they need it. The disciplinarian who bellowed at the boy he noticed seated at the counselor's desk, "What story are you telling now", showed his distrust of counseling as well as his lack of feeling for another human being. A school ruling requiring a pupil to state his problem to his home room adviser if he wished a referral to the counselor, is again indicative of limited understanding of what constitutes administrative support to a counseling service.

Ideally, the teacher should have time provided to talk over with the counselor what has come to his attention in his work with a pupil, how he has tried to help, and what further assistance he needs. The counselor needs this conference with the referring teacher as well as other conferences with several subject teachers who instruct the pupil if she is to be able to bring together what the school knows about the pupil. In actual practice, most frequently, time is not provided for such conferences. Counselors see teachers "on the fly". Even written referral forms are seldom used. What, if anything, can be expected in the way of teacher-counselor cooperation in helping children receive a sound introduction to counseling help?

As a minimum, the counselor ought to be able to expect a child to be referred sympathetically and without threat. The referral should feel to the teacher not so much like "a turning over" but "a taking on" of another's help in working on a problem of mutual concern to both teacher and counselor. The teacher who writes the following in referring a pupil to the counselor hints at his own efforts to help the girl succeed. "She gets into moods at times when she decides she is not going to do her work. When I urge her to do it, she says doesn't need to do her work if she doesn't want to. After a little more urging she does her work and does it satisfactorily." Enlisting the counselor's help requires that the teacher find some way, preferably a conference no matter how brief, to share what he knows about the pupil, her problem, and his own and the efforts of others to give her the help she needs.

Frequently the teacher seeks the counselor's help with a pupil when

there has been an outbreak of troublesome behavior in the classroom. The excerpt below taken from the counselor's record indicates this kind of referral.

"Jean was referred to the counselor because she had failed to keep a detention appointment. Note from teacher asked that counselor see him in his classroom before 6th period. Counselor visited classroom as requested. Mr. A. complained that Jean and four others had been extremely uncooperative and disorderly. They had moved their chairs needlessly, refused to do pre-class work, refused to do homework, and were generally disorderly and uncooperative. He seemed to be quite tense and upset by the incident.

Counselor learned from the other two counselors that Mr. A. is a very exacting person who is trying to impose rigid patterns of behavior on his classes. Mr. A. taught 5th grade in elementary school before he came to junior high as General Education teacher. Apparently these children had been docile and he had had no trouble with them. The counselors feel that he is emotionally unable to cope with the older children."

As I reviewed this material in conference with the counselor, I was concerned with two weaknesses in her work. Even though the teacher had arranged a conference, it did not appear that the counselor had helped him get behind Jean's bad conduct to what the girl was really like and why. Was Jean always uncooperative? Were there times she responded differently? Also, from the counselor's comments it would seem that she had formulated some opinions that could stand in the way of her understanding this teacher's feeling about requirements and a pupil's failure to meet them. This intolerance of the teacher's feeling could prevent their getting together on a plan to help Jean.

As the counselor works with the pupil referred she needs to keep in mind continually the pupil's inevitable return to the classroom where she has been having difficulty. In general junior high schools are able to be more flexible than senior high schools about permitting change of section or subject since there are no credit requirements to be met. The complicated roster involving many classes and teachers, however, makes changes on both levels highly impractical. Were this not the case it would still be necessary for the counselor to help pupils live within school limits, meeting contact with a variety of personalities and submitting to numerous requirements, some of which are bound to feel severe. Jean's counselor attempted to handle the girl's ignoring of her own responsibility and projecting of her difficulties on to Mr. A.

and his impossible demands, by clarfying the persistence of Jean's uncooperative behavior. The counselor's record continued thus:

"Jean's record revealed that she had failed badly last term. Therefore the counselor asked her whether other teachers had reported her to the office during this or other terms. Jean could not remember. Counselor showed her the record and Jean admitted that her cooperation grades have been bad. Counselor asked her what these poor cooperation marks showed. Although Jean could not articulate too well, we finally arrived at the conclusion that Jean had consistently failed to get along with her teachers. When the counselor asked her what she had done to earn these poor grades in cooperation, Jean said, 'I guess I have been bad'. Counselor asked what did she mean by that term. Jean reported that she had been reprimanded for throwing spitballs, sassing back, not keeping detentions, etc. Counselor then went over the significance of the term "bad" as used by the girl and pointed out that although these were annoying things which took a teacher's time and wasted Jean's time, they were signs of her not yet having grown up. Counselor emphasized the immaturity of the behavior. Jean seemed to recognize the distinction and seemed to be grateful that the counselor was saying she was immature rather than that her behavior was bad, for she said, 'Don't you think I'm bad? Everyone says I'm bad.'

"Counselor said she believed pupil was not acting her age. She thought Jean would grow up, but how long would it take? She was in junior high school now and her teacher had a right to expect her to act her age. Counselor asked if she was ready to think about what she proposed to do about this. Jean replied she thought she was. She would have to begin to cooperate with Mr. A. and her other teachers. Counselor asked exactly what she meant by that. Jean said, 'no sassing back'. Counselor said that was part of it. There was still that detention. What about that? Jean thought she would have to make this up."

The was something very firm and supporting in the way the counselor accepted in her conference with the pupil the teacher's requirements and the fact that Jean must change if she was to be able to get along in school. An important next step for the counselor would be her follow-up conference with Mr. A. when she would attempt to explain Jean's feeling that she was "bad". What could the teacher do about helping her affirm her "good"? Recognition of her efforts, no matter how clumsy, might help.

As the counselor continues her work with a pupil, there is need for her to keep the referring teacher abreast of her activity. Teachers resent

justifiably a counseling service that seems to ignore a request for help because there is no reporting back. Counselors have a great deal of a problem in handling this criticism since referrals are never evenly spaced and the most urgent demands have a way of getting ahead of requests mildly put. Then there is the ever present problem of getting to teachers at a time when they are free to be consulted. Hastily written memoranda, prepared forms, or check lists seldom are acceptable means of communicating with teachers. They are better than long silences, however, in which teachers are left with their opinions of an inefficient service.

At this point in the process, it is highly important for the counselor to find a way to initiate a conference with the teacher not only to keep him informed of the counselor's work with the pupil but also to be assured of his sustained interest and help. Counselors rely upon this consultation in order to understand what reactions to counseling help the pupil is showing in the classroom situation. The pupil's feeling about her own growth needs to be considered against the sobering accounting for teacher observations of her attitude and conduct.

Parents are consulted frequently as the counselor's work with a pupil progresses. They are concerned about teachers' marks, conflicts their children are having with particular teachers.

Some counselors feel pressed to draw the teacher into a conference with pupil or parent when a child's work in a particular classroom is being discussed. Unless the conference is conducted primarily to clarify a point of information, such use of the teacher's time is seldom warranted. It may happen that a teacher's presence would allow him to become involved in a process for which he cannot be responsible. A counselor learned this the hard way when she found a mother turning to an English teacher, brought into a conference because the pupil had difficulty in reading, for help in securing her son's respect and obedience. The teacher thought bad companions were making the boy defiant. He was emphatic about how he would supervise the boy's choice of friends and recreation. Sensitive recognition of the parent's need to understand clearly what her boy was like at school, might have prompted a more skillful counselor to prepare for the parent interview by using the teacher's help in a preliminary conference. Later she would interpret the results of their cooperative thinking about the boy's needs to the parent.

When there is sufficient working together at every point where responsible help to a pupil requires this, there is less tension aroused

by the question of how much of what a counselor learns about a pupil is to be shared. Teachers become more assured, as they have a part in each step taken, that they have received, even as they have given, to this process in which they have equal stake with the counselor. This very sharing helps the teacher to become more understanding of the need to hold certain confidences inviolate, even as the counselor becomes more sensitive to the use that could be made of certain information she possesses, in the classroom.

A great deal could be said on the subject of the building up of a teacher's belief in the counseling function by means of his seeing a pupil through a difficult time. One counselor had her conviction strengthened about the potential helpfulness of most teachers in the counseling process when she witnessed unmistakable change in a teacher's attitude. The teacher's referral of the pupil was barren of anything that felt like confidence in the counselor. Henry, the pupil, was all but destroyed by the torrent of condemnation that accompanied his being thrust on the counselor with a "See what you can do with him. I won't have him in my classroom". There were several months of painstaking work with Henry during which time the teacher shared the counselor's efforts to help a boy who had an involved medical history including tubercular tendencies find some strength within himself to cope with the hardness of rejecting parents and a deprived environment. Even though this pupil's use of counseling help was evident in his increased self-respect and periods of ability to conform in school, he was later suspended. The counselor told me in conference how this suspension affected the teacher. I used this in helping her recognize the extent to which her own activity was responsible for the teacher's reaction. My notes referring to this part of our conference follow:

"About the end of the conference Miss Smith told me that something interesting had happened in her relationship with teachers. Mr. Fisher, the teacher who had so much difficulty with Henry early in the term, had talked with her about Henry's suspension. Mr. Fisher had said the boy should never have been suspended. I said to Miss Smith that it looked as though this teacher had come a long way in understanding a pupil like Henry, and I guessed Miss Smith was gratified about what she had put into helping Mr. Fisher change his attitude. Miss Smith was pleased that I recognized her feeling about this. I asked whether she had related what happened with Mr. Fisher to her principal's action in respect to Henry. The counselor said she had thought about this relationship; that if the principal had had more time to get to know the boy and understand how much had gone into his improvement,

she might have felt differently about Henry also. I said it certainly seemed that way to me. I remembered the time when Mr. Fisher would have wanted Henry suspended immediately. I thought, however, that again this conference with Mr. Fisher pointed up how much had gone into helping Henry change sufficiently to live within the school limits. I said directly to Miss Smith that I realized she would feel guilty about her part in what happened, unless she had been clear at each point when Henry had a lapse in his behavior, in pointing up the fact that he still had not improved enough to get along within school limits. Miss Smith was interested in this, I felt that her part in helping a pupil face the reality of the school was better understood."

The latter reference to the counselor's part in helping a pupil live within the reality of the school environment brings me to a brief consideration of a final essential in considering counselor-teacher relationships. No school can tolerate a counselor who persists in undermining its purposes by a fundamental distrust of its structure, policies, and personnel. Distrust is seldom as total as this, yet still it makes itself felt in many ways. The counselor who is embittered against the administrator who suspends a pupil, at a crucial point in her work with him, loses her effectiveness. Not only does she cease to be helpful to this pupil but she builds the barrier higher between counselor and administrator.

Less dramatic, but equally significant in effecting good relationships, are the comments the counselor makes to pupils and parents about the school, whether supporting or damaging. The counselor who in responding to a pupil's statement that he didn't like school said, "Most boys and girls don't. Their parents make them come to school" betrayed a doubt of the school that would give cause for questioning her fitness to be the school's representative. The counselor, on the other hand, who works long and patiently with parents who believe a dull boy of 15 years who loves school should contribute to the family earnings, in order to help them understand his right to an education to the limit of his capacities, possesses enthusiasm for the democratic objectives of the school.

It is on this level of mutual identification with the undeniably high purposes of the school that counselor and teacher find themselves ultimately in complete accord. Accomplishing more effective working relationships with faculty members in the minutes and hours of daily service to children, however, rests in large part upon the knowledge, sensitivity, and skill of the counselor, as well as upon her utmost devotion to her agency, the school.

THE DYNAMICS OF THE COUNSELING SITUATION

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The counselor's unique function in the educational team is that he is the worker whose job it is to handle the difficult situation and people with problems. His existence as a professional person arises from the fact that there are questions that cannot be casually answered and situations which do not yield to cursory handling. The questions may be matter of fact—as, when can I get working papers, or may I take French in my Freshman year. Though these simple questions sometimes lead into unexpected areas, they are usually easy questions, with no strings attached.

On the other hand, some questions are harder. The hardest questions are unformulated ones which neither child nor parent know how to ask. The people involved are conscious only of exasperation, anger, fear, frustration. When this is the case we ask ourselves: What can the counselor bring to the situation that will first, precipitate the question, and then lead in the direction of solution of the problem? What can we do that will make it possible for the individual to move from here—where he is—over to there where he would like to be: From here with his poor grades, his irresponsibility and his cockiness; with his excessive timidity, his quailing before bullying classmates, and his drifting—over to another way of living and feeling where he will use his endowment to the best advantage, take hold of situations systematically and creatively and meet the exigencies of everyday with reasonable confidence.

Now it is beguiling to diagnose—to say with finality that a boy has an I.Q. of 96 and so will find learning at the secondary school level difficult. That it is probably for this reason he is getting a headache regularly on quiz days. Or that here is an extremely able boy with an I.Q. in the upper one percent. But he is a spoiled only child who has never had to submit to any home discipline and is therefore unable to submit to intellectual discipline in the school.

This is a tempting activity for school guidance people because it gives them a sense of having discharged a professional responsibility. It is the more tempting, perhaps, because it is something they *can* do, whereas getting parents and children to change often seems so impossible a task. But the counselor's task does not end with understanding, necessary as that is. The counselor's responsibility is to foster and

to facilitate change. It is helpful occasionally to take stock of what the counselor can and does do which plays a significant part in the change which children undergo, with the help of the counselor.

I.

The counselor's ability in facilitating change rests in no small degree upon his own personality. But, fortunately for his peace of mind, he does not have to carry the entire responsibility in his own person. Certain factors in the structure of the counseling set-up make a major contribution to the dynamics of growth through the counseling process. These structural aspects lie primarily in the kinds of responsibilities the counselor assumes. These responsibilities divide themselves sharply into attitudes and undertakings which on the one hand the counselor will make his own, and on the other, which he will not take or accept.

In the first place the counselor is not a teacher. It is not his job, as counselor, to try directly by instruction, admonition or reprimand to hold the child to an objective standard of achievement or even of discipline. That somebody must take this kind of responsibility we all recognize. No child could come to wholesome maturity without the pressure of teachers at these points. But the wise counselor will let the teacher retain that jurisdiction.

In the second place, the counselor is not a parent, who moulds, directs and controls and to whom the child is bound by ties of love and duty. Nor does the counselor find his own sense of achievement—as do both parents and teachers—in the achieving of the child they nurture and instruct.

II.

The responsibilities which the counselor does undertake define and go far to make possible the movement and change which is his particular concern.

First, the counselor must assume responsibility for making his service and himself acceptable. In most social case work situations the worker can assume that the client's coming means he is at least a little ready to take help. In the school setting we cannot make this assumption with the child—nor even with a parent. For the child and sometimes the parent is sent. He comes, often as not, with a passive, or a resistant or a frightened attitude. He may be uncertain why he was sent to someone called a counselor, since he has very vague ideas as to what place a counselor holds in the educational picture. Not infrequently a parent says, "I talked to the principal about my daughter's poor grades

and he sent me to you." The meaning of this is: "I have been palmed off. Who are you and what is your part in this? What is the meaning of my being sent here?" Thus the initial task in helping children or parent—is to help him understand what a counselor is and does and how he may be useful at this particular time.

In making himself and his function acceptable, the counselor undertakes no mean task. People come to him with a variety of attitudes. There is the hurt and bewildered individual who brings ready acceptance of the counselor. Alice enters the office and slouches into a chair. "Do you know why you are here?" the counselor asks. "Yes," Alice replies, "it is because of my bad school work," and bursts out crying. The tears roll in floods down her pink cheeks and fall onto her spotted gym suit. This overweight, rather sloppy, work-dodging eleven-year-old tells her pathetic story of attending many schools, of being disliked by other children, of her bewilderment with methods she does not know and of material too hard for her. Alice is ready for anything somebody else will do. We cannot assume, however, that her ready admitting of the counselor to her complete confidence promises that Alice is ready to change. But at least she has opened the door wide.

There is the bright, brittle attitude which says there is no problem. The front is well preserved. The youngster will tell you she is there because Mummy or Miss Smith sent her. Tell me what to do and I'll do it she implies. Don't let the counselor know, such an attitude says, of the hurt pride when your best friend let you down. Don't let her guess that a morning sniffle turns into a full blown respiratory infection when the crowd at school gives you a cold shoulder. Sometimes it will help such a child to let her know you understand she has areas in which her contemporaries regard her as a leader. When she is a little more secure in her ego values she can perhaps bear to have the counselor wonder if eveything is quite so smoothly perfect as she at first said it was.

We all know the critical contemptuous student. In the young adolescent this armor quickly cracks. With later adolescence the youth may be pretty certain of his own superiority and rightness. Working with such a youngster requires restraint—for unfortunately his attitude often strikes at the foundations of our own security so that we feel a need to defend--and from defense slide imperceptibly over into aggression. The counselor needs to be so mature and so secure that he can bear to have the youngster think him a fool. The counselor may challenge the youth just a bit by a twinkle in the eye—so that the fresh young man

will know that you comprehend the meaning of his attitude and that it does not much disturb you. But the mature counselor will not laugh—because he is too wise and too full of mercy. He will know that in a young person this bad behavior is a quaking edifice sheltering a vast uncertainty. The counselor will patiently wait for the adolescent to take down his own makeshift barricade.

Waiting is, in fact, one of the techniques the counselor has found most useful. He can afford to wait, for he knows the individual would not be in the counselor's office if he did not have a problem. And he will know, too, that people have to protect themselves when they are hurt or frightened. He will let them do it their own way.

Nothing is more important for the effective beginning of a counseling relationship than ripeness for referral. The facility with which movement takes place is directly related to this factor. If the individual who comes to the counselor's office is ready to take help from any responsible source, the counselor's first task—that of making his function acceptable—is vastly eased. One of our responsibilities as a member of a school staff is to help referring teachers and administrative officers to be sensitively aware of this readiness. This is an area in which they can use and are ordinarily eager to have the counselor's help.

III.

A second structural factor in the counseling relationship is the counselor's responsibility to inform the child and his parents. Facts and circumstances both within and outside the self of the child must be carefully and accurately explored. This material must then be passed on to the people involved. Full and trustworthy information about jobs, educational opportunities, places and costs of special services must be at the counselor's finger-tips. He must be able also to determine facts and trends within the individual counseled. This will entail careful study with the child of his past record in regard to health, academic achievements and extra curricular activities. These facts will be focussed upon the present problem. They will never be used as a weapon or a spur. The youth will be led to see that the things he has and has not been able to do constitute an important part of the raw material with which he will build the future.

The study of the child will probably involve a full scale psychological examination, for the counselor will use psychological test results both to discover the relative status of the child and to find out how much effort certain types of learning are likely to cost him. With test results

he can make an approximate surmise as to the possibility of success and in extreme cases he can determine whether failure is certain.

To the child and his parents the psychological examination is a threatening experience. At worst the psychologist seems to them a dealer in hocus-pocus who will peer coldly at the child and deliver a final verdict from which there is no retreat and no dissent. At best he is one who will subject the child to objective scrutiny. Now to be looked at objectively is not an easy experience. How we dread the fluoroscope and the x-ray—especially if we fear something is amiss. In the mind of the lay person a psychological examination is a close relative of these medical instruments of black magic. The counselor will interpret to parents and children the meaning of a psychological test and will help them see how the results will serve a purpose in planning. He will stress that the test gives only one more piece of evidence which will be considered in conjunction with everything else that is known about the child. Nothing is more important in making the interpretation effective than the counselor's awareness of how the proposed examination feels to the parent and child.

It is equally important to help a parent receive the findings. He should be reported to fearlessly and honestly. Except in a few instances it is probably better to let a parent have the exact truth. This does not necessarily involve stating an I.Q.—which for a variety of reasons should probably be withheld. But circumstances sometimes arise in which it is wiser to disclose even this. If the findings are unpleasant it is especially important to provide an opportunity for a parent to express dissent.

There are several ways in which a parent may take test reports. He may openly reject the child revealed. Or he may reject the findings. It will more often be the findings he frankly rejects. But refusal to accept findings may really mean that he is rejecting the child as he is—the only way he is able to be. The counselor will not argue nor urge the findings, but will make the results quite clear, especially where important decisions turn upon the test results. Favorable aspects will be stressed since they are indicators for action. At the same time it is well to recognize, if it exists, the parent's pain and disappointment.

A lawyer had always planned for his son to come into his firm and take over the practice in a few years. The careful and exhaustive examination of the boy yielded an I.Q. of 93 and the father had to be informed that his plan was probably not going to be feasible. The counselor needed high skill to help the man accept the findings and

still feel warmly and without bitterness toward the boy who cannot fulfill the father's hopes. Interestingly enough, if the parent accepts the findings, the child will usually find little difficulty in doing so. He may experience a profound release from a struggle after inaccessible goals.

When the basic facts concerning ability are known, parent and child can then move out into a consideration of new plans and emerging desires. They are ready for the first time to give realistic consideration to the information the counselor can give as to training and opportunities for work. Through this last step in the counseling process the family together may achieve a happy acceptance of the compromises they may have had to work out.

IV.

A third feature of the counseling process is that it provides an arena in which a child or parent can come to grips with essential issues. This is perhaps the truly unique thing about the counseling situation. Here child and parent find a place where the forces that pull and push, drive and persuade in every other life setting are for a little time left behind.

In other situations the child may feel he must argue, object, resist, or beguile parents, relatives and teachers. In other relationships he feels bound to appease, defy, circumvent. He will bring his pattern of meeting situations—particularly difficult situations—to the counselor. But the counselor will not be drawn into the time worn groove with the child. He will let the child know he need not argue because it takes two people to argue; that he need not resist because nothing is pushing him; that he need not appease because here no one is angry; that he has no need to circumvent because no one blocks his path.

How can a counselor achieve this objectivity and still be under responsibility for the child's welfare? He can do it because he knows that this is the best way, perhaps the only way, to foster growth and wholesome, self-maintaining development. Thus he accepts the child's right to be himself as he must be at this time, even though that may be very different from the way the counselor himself is. He is deeply convinced that you cannot validly push or pull or persuade people into attitudes or actions that have not grown within them and which they do not genuinely accept. He is even wary when the people with whom he counsels too readily accept a way the counselor himself feels to be right, for he fears he may have unwittingly brought an agreement with his own view against which there will later have to be counter movement.

This caution should not be confused with non-directive therapy which lets the individual find his way with practically no guidance. The individual needs help on some concrete issues—factual data, reactions, considered opinions which may serve him as landmarks. This will include the information about himself, about fields of activity and perhaps even an opinion as to what is in general a good course of action in a given situation. But the individual must be left free to choose what he will do so far as this is at all feasible in the school framework. The counselor will let him feel that his decisions are his own to make in whatever ways he must.

A bright girl wanted to leave college for a business job. She had no training for business yet she was making good grades and showed promise in higher mathematics. She had been sent to that particular college by a father who had always made decisions for the whole family. The girl had carried on a life long vendetta with her father and with late adolescence she had come to feel she would win integrity as a person only through gaining economic independence. Who can say it is more important to finish college than it is to be free?

The counselor is bound to tell her she will probably have a better chance for a good job with good pay if she does finish. It is only honest to let her know that her father is a person, too, who with all his weaknesses probably loves her. She must be allowed to explore the possibility of guilt feelings arising out of a violent break with her family. Then the counselor will have to set her free of any pressure and stand aside while she arrives at her own decision.

V.

Futher, the school counselor's function is to facilitate action. This part of the function has a very special significance in the school setting because there are so few things in the school environment which the child himself can manipulate or alter. We are bound to do some things for him. Actual circumstances may so aggravate a trouble that no healing or growth is possible. A change of course, a shift of section, a lunch allowance, a new outfit of clothes these things properly handled, can be done for a child without destroying his initiative or independence. We must remember, of course, that manipulation of environment alone rarely suffices in a real problem. Yet in our preoccupation with psychological factors we must not forget that few people think clearly or behave courageously on empty stomachs or in the presence of frustrating and humiliating odds.

In working with parents more restraint should be exercised in offering to alter external circumstances which they might with some exertion handle for themselves.

VI.

Finally, there is a factor which does not belong to the structure of the counseling situation but which infuses all the counselor does with and for people. This is his recognition that the strongest and most dependable thing in any dealings with human beings is the human being himself. The life impulse—the need to grow is on the side of feasible modes of adjustment. The variety and resilience of human fiber is astounding. People never lose their capacity to surprise us. They are almost never finally beaten. This is something to count on. A girl with 30% hearing, a spastic hand and frail general health came for counseling. In discussing her vocational plan she said quietly, "All my life I have been doing things everybody said I could not do." You are bound to belive her. In every individual the miraculous growth impulse exists. It is this conviction on the part of the counselor that provides the most significant and powerful catalytic in the dynamics of the counseling situation.

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The Bulletin is issued quarterly.

Single copies 50 cents. Larger quantities at reduced rates.